**Unbreakable**

Develop a plan to bounce back from setbacks as you navigate adversity and build resilience.

| Type | Workshop |
| --- | --- |
| Purpose | Resilience |
| Topics | Resilience, habits, self-care, learning and growth |
| Audience | Executives |

## **About this activity**

According to a study by Deloitte on the C-suite’s role in well-being, 41% of executives felt stressed, 40% overwhelmed, 36% exhausted, and 30% lonely. The research suggests that there’s never been a better time to think about resilience and how leaders navigate tough times at work and home.

In this workshop session, participants will learn key factors that contribute to personal and professional resilience, including mindset, adaptability, support, and self-care. They will work on their own to create a resilience plan that will guide them through failure and setbacks and give them the tools and strategies to move forward as leaders.

Unbreakable is designed for executives in an in-person, hybrid, or remote setting.

#### Important details

| Best for groups of | Unlimited |
| --- | --- |
| Preparation time | 15 minutes |
| Duration | 90 minutes |
| Required materials | * Flipchart and markers or whiteboard * 4S Resilience Plan * Pen/pencil * Timer * Meeting platform, if virtual |
| Required location | * Indoors or outdoors |
| Noise level | Low |

## **How it works**

#### Instructions

Before conducting the activity (15 minutes):

The facilitator will read the instructions and make a copy of the 4S Resilience Plan for each participant, or email copies to virtual participants in advance of the session.

Conducting the activity:

Introduction (20-30 minutes):

The facilitator will begin by asking participants what comes to mind when they hear the word “resilience.” As participants call out answers, the facilitator will write them on the flipchart or whiteboard.

The facilitator will ask which of these answers overlap with qualities that a good leader possesses and circle them. Participants should be encouraged to think of any other leadership qualities that also demonstrate resilience and add them to the list.

The facilitator will then share a quote from researcher and Ted Talk speaker Brene Brown about leadership and resilience: “If you’re going to dare greatly, you’re going to get your ass kicked at some point. If you choose courage, you will absolutely know failure, disappointment, setback, even heartbreak. That’s why we call it courage. That’s why it’s so rare.”

When discussing this quote, the facilitator will share an example from their own experience of a failure or setback and how they found the courage to keep going. The facilitator will then ask for a few participants to share their stories. The takeaway is that no one is exempt from experiencing setbacks.

At this time, the facilitator should introduce the work of Martin Seligman and his work on resilience through the lens of positive psychology. Seligman’s framework outlines three Ps that individuals must overcome to build resilience:

1. Personalization – This occurs when we internalize failures and hold ourselves accountable for bad things that happen, even when they are not our fault. When we do this, we put a lot of unnecessary blame on ourselves and make it harder to bounce back.
2. Pervasiveness – This happens when we let one negative situation impact many different areas of our lives, or what some would call “catastrophizing.” By acknowledging that bad feelings or experiences don’t impact every part of our lives, we can move forward toward a better life.
3. Permanence – This is believing that bad experiences or events last forever, rather than being transient or one-off events. Permanence prevents us from putting effort into improving our situation, often making us feel overwhelmed and as though we can’t recover.

These three perspectives help us understand how our thoughts, mindsets, and beliefs affect our experiences. By recognizing their role in our ability to adapt positively, we can make a plan for how we find the support, resources, and wisdom to bounce back from life’s challenges and keep going as leaders.

Make a Resilience Plan (40 minutes):

The facilitator will ask participants to think about a setback they are currently facing in their professional or personal lives. As they do so, the facilitator will hand out copies of the 4S Resilience Plan for in-person attendees.

The facilitator will instruct participants to take the next 30 minutes to work on their own resilience plan, which will address four key areas:

1. Supports - The mentors, family members, spouses, partners, friends, pets, coaches, therapists, and others that will walk alongside us on this journey and provide advice, guidance, encouragement, a listening ear, a laugh, etc.
2. Strategies - These are the hands-on things we do right now to keep forward moving through the challenge. This encompasses everything from business decisions that tackle the setback in a different way to journaling, gardening, taking a day off to rest, leaving an unhealthy relationship, etc. Strategies are what we choose to do to make our situations better.
3. Sagacity - This is wisdom, whether it is advice from our supporters, quotes we’ve read in books, business acumen that we’ve acquired over the years, spiritual writings and scriptures, etc. Wisdom reminds us that we’re not alone and inspires us to find a way through failure or setbacks.
4. Solution-Seeking - These are actions we undertake now to position ourselves for future success as we move away from failure or setbacks. This may be seeking advice from a coach or therapist, reaching out to an expert to consult on a business problem, going back to school to learn a missing skillset, etc.

Participants should fill in short descriptions for each S on the 4S Plan quadrant and use the journal pages to write longer descriptions of action steps and ideas.

Wrap-Up (20 minutes):

With the remaining time, the facilitator should discuss the following questions as a group and allow for responses as time allows:

1. Does anyone feel comfortable sharing a few strategies or pieces of wisdom from their resilience plan?
2. What is something you learned about yourself while making your resilience plan?
3. What are some things we can do after today’s session to ensure we’ll carry out our resilience plans?

The facilitator will remind participants that building resilience is an ongoing process and that their plans should evolve as they grow and adapt to changing circumstances. They should regularly revisit and update their resilience plans to ensure they remain relevant and effective in supporting their leadership journeys.

#### Rules

Honesty is key - participants will not share any part of their plan with anyone else unless they choose to.

#### Example

None

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## **Materials**

#### For facilitator

Flipchart and markers or whiteboard

Timer

Meeting platform, if virtual

#### For attendee

4S Resilience Plan

Pen/Pencil